

# The Bethlehem Star

A PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH AND CHILDREN'S CENTER



Volume 70, Issue 3

March 2020

## From Pastor Bill

When I was a kid I used to watch my father hold the syrup bottle upside down until the last drop drained out. He could hold longer than I could watch. When we discovered the uneaten rolls at our restaurant table didn't go back into a giant bin of rolls to be distributed to other customers... he would eat all the remainders in the basket. A habit he only relinquishes because of the modern era take home box, and my mother's quick hands. Finishing everything on your plate was an absolute in our family, at home or away. These principles fell under the general virtue of waste not, want not.

It seems a good lesson to learn especially when you're coming to grips about how to manage resources. And without a doubt it's part of the origin story of the big parties on the eve of Lent. Mardi Gras, Shrove Tuesday, Fat Tuesday, Shrovetide, Fettisdagen, and Carnival (Wikipedia goes on). Use the resources before the fast prohibits their consumption. In all this there is a certain excess that tends to exaggerate beyond the point of loss in the so called spiritually reflective season. Likewise, the excesses of self-denial seem to become a competition between individuals, to the point we no longer find this a unifying part of our community.

This year the direction of our mid-week worship is Philippians 2:5-11. You may recognize this as the Epistle or Second Lesson from Passion Sunday. It is an invitation to transform our minds in light of the narrative of Palm and Passion Sunday as we enter Holy Week. Rather than saving the verses for that day perhaps we can take them as a bookmark, a morning meditation, a refrigerator posting and use the pause to remember the transforming, the metamorphosis, the intention of this season. This makes a good daily reminder we might all contemplate during this Lenten season, joining ourselves in the same mind and together as the same body in Christ.

See you in church!

-Pastor Bill

## Daffodil Cross

As you enter our driveway, look to the right and you will see the cross emerging from the earth. The green leaves are rising up, and soon the daffodils will be blooming to form the shape of a cross! This beautiful cross was planted by Linda Knapp, and can be seen each year during the season of Lent.



## Journey through Lent

Each Wednesday, throughout the six weeks of Lent, we continue the tradition of a simple soup supper at 6:00 p.m. followed by a half hour devotional service beginning at 7:00 p.m. Worship is centered around a Lenten choral vespers service.

Plan on joining us each Wednesday evening from February 26th through April 1st.

*Gathered to worship,  
Equipped by the Holy Spirit,  
Strengthened through community,  
Sent in peace to serve the Lord.*

## Philippians 2:5-11

- <sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that that was in Christ Jesus,  
<sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,  
<sup>7</sup>but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form,  
<sup>8</sup>he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.  
<sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,  
<sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
<sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.



# Women's History Month

Each March is designated Women's History Month by Presidential proclamation. The month is set aside to honor women's contributions in American history.

Did you Know? Women's History Month started as Women's History Week in 1978, a local celebration started right here in Santa Rosa<sup>1</sup>. The movement spread across the country as other communities initiated their own Women's History Week celebrations the following year.

With gratitude for those who have gone before and hope for the future, the ELCA gives thanks to God for the ministry of women. In 2020 we celebrate 50 years of Lutheran women being ordained in the United States. 40 years of women of color being ordained and 10 years of LGBTQIA+ individuals being able to serve freely<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>National Women's History Museum.org  
<sup>2</sup>ELCA.org

## BLC Day at F.I.S.H.

F.I.S.H. stands for "friends in service here". A team of volunteers from Bethlehem Lutheran will be volunteering their service to fill grocery bags and hand out food at Santa Rosa's F.I.S.H. food pantry on Saturday, March 28th at 10:15 a.m. Get involved and feed the hungry during Lent!



## Spring Break

The Bethlehem Children's Center will be closed Monday, March 16th-20th for Spring Break.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church and Children's Center

1300 St. Francis Road, Santa Rosa, California 95409

Sunday worship services: 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Church Office: 707/539-5252, Hours: 9-3, M-F

Church Website: [www.blc-bcc.com](http://www.blc-bcc.com)

Church Email: [blc@sonic.net](mailto:blc@sonic.net)

Children's Center: 707/538-2266

Pastor:

Bill Wessner  
 707-782-8703 (Pastor's cell)  
 Email: [pastorbill.blc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbill.blc@gmail.com)

Congregational Officers:

Cal Eriksen, President  
 Brad Powell, Vice President  
 Bev Powell, Secretary  
 Beverly Schaap, Treasurer  
 Susan Jenkins, Financial Secretary

Council Commissioners:

Nancy Trbovich, Education  
 Nick Keane, Property  
 George Kuhn, Stewardship

Linda Knapp, Witness & Service  
 Carolyn Cole-Schweizer, Worship  
 Michelle Thomson, Youth  
 Janet Krug, BCC Representative  
 Siri Fenson, Bethlehem WELCA President

Staff:

Michelle Frabotta, Parish Administrator  
 Deborah McNally, Tiffany Perry-Co-Directors  
 Bethlehem Children's Center 538-2266  
 Janet Bertoli, Adult & Youth Choirs  
 Barbara Laferriere, Organist, Adult Choir,  
 Melissa Kuhn, Bell Choir  
 Laura Llerena, Youth Choirs  
 Debbie Knudtson, Parish Nurse 537-7450

## Men of Bethlehem

The Men of Bethlehem (the MoB) will be meeting on Tuesday, March 17th at 7:00 p.m.

All men are welcome to join our community for food, fellowship, and discussion. Our lively talks are sometimes based on recent stories in the magazine Living Lutheran, on stories from the Bible, or on current events.

All men are welcome.



## Life Pax



"Feeding the Hungry and Sharing the Love of Christ one meal at a time!"

The youth have put together a new supply of Life Pax, and they are available on the table in the Narthex. The donation jar is right next to them and the requested donation is \$2 each to cover the cost. Thank you!

Members are encouraged to store a few in their cars, and share them when they see someone on the street asking for food or money.

## Care Notes

The Health Ministries Committee has a display of "Care Notes" in the Narthex that offer encouragement for all kinds of life situations. Please help yourself to any that you, or someone you know, might find useful.



## Second Mile Sunday

On March 8th, Bethlehem Lutheran Church along with the other churches in the Sierra Pacific Synod support a special Lutheran program with a special offering, beyond your pledged offering. This month the focus is on Campus Ministry.

The mission of Campus Ministry is "Expanding minds, deepening faith, and inspiring service". There are seven different colleges that provide many different programs for students from; a place to connect with God, to worship with peers and to have Bible studies; to community outreach such as homeless shelters, food pantries and low-income home building projects.

These are the seven Northern California Campuses:



The Belfry: Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry at UC Davis

Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry at CSU Monterey Bay

University Church at Stanford: Episcopal Lutheran Campus Ministry

Lutheran Campus Ministry of Fresno

University Chapel of Berkeley: Lutheran & Episcopal Campus Ministry at Cal

Lutheran Campus Ministry at UC Santa Cruz

Sacramento Area Campus Ministry

## WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM: GOOD NEWS!

A third Bethlehem Bible study circle has just been formed; its name is Rebekah. Thirteen ladies, BLC members and friends, will gather every second Thursday at 10:00 a.m. either in the Parish Hall or in someone's home. The Bible study material is from the WELCA, *Gather* magazine. Leaders of the study will be assigned on a rotating basis.



Rebekah Circle will support Santa Rosa's The Living Room; a day center welcoming homeless, or at-risk of becoming homeless, women and their children. Our Bible verse is "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20)

-Siri Fenson

## Contemporary Sunday March 8th

One Sunday a month, usually the second Sunday, the Bethlehem community worships accompanied by guitar, piano, bass, flute and other instrumentation at the 10:30 a.m. service.

The pattern of liturgy is familiar, the songs often have a more contemporary rhythm and "feel". Be sure to check out, and enjoy, Bethlehem's monthly "contemporary" Sunday, March 8th.



## Lenten Soup Supper Sign-up's

The Lenten Soup Suppers begin on February 26th and continue through April 1st. If you would like to bring a pot of soup or bread, there is a sign-up located on the kiosk in the Narthex.



## BLC Sewing Group

The BLC Sewing Group meets every 3rd and 5th Tuesday each month (if there is a 5th Tuesday).



New helping hands are always welcomed and appreciated. No experience is necessary - on the job training is provided!

In March, they will be meeting on the 17th. Contact Beverly Schaap if you have any questions at 527-2872.

## Lenten "Flour"

During the season of Lent, BLC adorns the altar with non-perishable food items rather than flowers, and each week takes this bounty to F.I.S.H. where it is distributed to those that need it.



The sign-up to bring a bag or two of groceries is in the Narthex, just as if you were signing up for flowers.



# March

- 1 Gary Wilkening
- 2 Else Gillette
- 3 Elaine Bowers
- 4 Steve & Kathleen Sturgeon (41)
- 5 Amanda Knudtson
- 6 Joyce Mortensen-Child, David Vogel
- 8 Leslee Cramer
- 9 Kristi Marlar, Stephen Virtue
- 10 Kathy Phillips
- 11 Gary Stein, Donald Schaap, Gabriel Gutsch
- 12 Charlene Shaw, George Kuhn, Max Fenson, Luke Anderson
- 15 Steve Jenkin, Dennis Marvin
- 18 Jennifer Wong
- 19 Mark Knapp, Maureen Caudill
- 21 Janet & JJ Krug (38)
- 22 Steve & Doris Gospe (62)
- 24 Leah Morrow
- 26 Bob Bimbi
- 27 Francine Majcherek, Ronald Barnekow, Nicholas Barnes
- 28 Dylan Thomson, Hannah Kelly
- 29 Justin Majcherek, Nicholas Jeye
- 31 Beverly Schaap



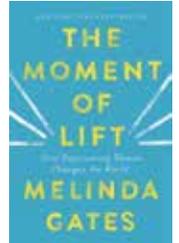
**We  
Celebrate  
YOU!**

## BLC Book Club picks for 2020

The book club meets every month to talk about books they have read. Everyone is invited to join in these interesting discussions. You can find copies of several of the books on the table in the Narthex. Upcoming books are:

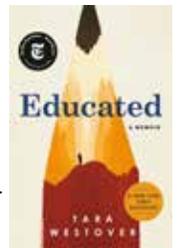
March 3rd - The Moment of Lift by Melinda Gates

Melinda Gates has spent many years working with women around the world. This book is an urgent manifesto for an equal society where women are valued and recognized in all spheres of life. Most of all, it is a call for unity, inclusion and connection.



April 7th - Educated: A Memoir by Tara Westover

Tara Westover wasn't your garden variety college student. When the Holocaust was mentioned in history class, she didn't know what it was. That's because she didn't see the inside of a classroom until the age of seventeen. She tells a miraculous story of the level of grit-not to mention intellect-required to pull off what Westover did, eventually earning a PhD from Cambridge.



We normally meet in BLC's Fireside Room at 7 pm on these evenings. Everyone is welcome.

- Linda Knapp

## Youth Service

March 1st is the date for the next Youth Service. All youth are welcome to participate. Please get in touch with Janet Bertoli at (707) 696-6535 or Laura Llerena (707) 953-2674 to get involved.



## How about a Can?

Lent is a time for all of us to reach out. If "Flours for the Altar" seems overwhelming, bring a can each Sunday for the basket during the season of Lent. The goal through Lent is to bring in 1,000 pounds for the F.I.S.H.

Food pantry. Let's show our loving, giving spirit to the community. All of us working together can achieve great things!



## Communion Wafers

During the season of Lent the Bethlehem community gathers to celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion with wafers rather than our home-baked breads. This serves as another reminder of our Lenten journey, and our focus to keep life more simple.



# Reflect, repent and reconnect

By: Cory Driver

(Living Lutheran, February 2020)

Lent is a time of introspection, and even penance, as we look forward with humble awe and deep gratitude to the celebration of Jesus' resurrection.



The modern practices of Lent have ancient pedigrees. The term "Lent" comes from the Old English word *lencten*, which referred to the "lengthening" of the daylight hours during spring. Christians in northwestern Europe and the British Isles appropriated this term for the spring liturgical season.

Lent was traditionally a time for preparing both longtime believers and new converts for the welcoming of new Christians into the community through their baptisms, which were celebrated during the Eastertide. Lent continues to be a time of preparation of self and the community as we look forward to the expansion of God's reign and the defeat of sin and death.

Lenten practices traditionally fall into three broad categories: justice toward God, justice toward oneself and justice toward others. Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving to meet these goals.

The following activities can help mark this important season:

## **Justice toward God**

- Rededicate yourself to living into your holy vocation to extend God's reign in your daily life.
- Meditate on God's faithful and sacrificial love for us to cultivate deep and abiding gratitude.

## **Justice toward oneself**

- Remember in humility that you are created of dust and to dust you shall return.
- Take time to honestly, critically and gently evaluate how you have loved God and neighbor -or not- and how the Spirit might be calling you to do better.
- Fast from rich and delicious food to help yourself consciously break patterns of selfishness and overconsumption.
- Repent of patterns and habits that harm yourself and/or others.

## **Justice toward others**

- Continue the traditional Lenten practice of increased giving to people experiencing poverty.
- Commit your time, energy and resources to supporting social justice causes through such organizations and programs as the Lutheran World Federation ([lutheranworld.org](http://lutheranworld.org)) and the ELCA Good Gifts project ([goodgifts.elca.org](http://goodgifts.elca.org)).
- Invite acquaintances (or strangers!) to share a meal and share their stories.

However one practices Lent, it's a time of introspection and preparing to celebrate Jesus' taking away of our sins, sinfulness and embrace of death over life. It's important that we don't wallow in self-contempt. Rather, with confidence in Jesus' salvation, we should repent of negative patterns and live into Jesus' calling to love God and our neighbors.



# YOUTH GROUP NEWS

We have some activities planned and are in the process of planning for the coming year. Here's what we have calendared so far –

Thanks to everyone for their contributions to our annual Souper Bowl of Caring. This year, we raised over \$479.27 that was divided between F.I.S.H, Friends In Service Here, which is a food bank we regularly support, and the Redwood Gospel Mission. They were both very pleased to be the winners!



Many thanks for all the Youth and helpers who put together LifePax in February. We have many more available, so be sure and pick some up so you have a supply on hand to pass out to those who could use the extra help.

On Sunday, March 1st, is Youth Service. All Bethlehem Youth are invited and encouraged to participate. There are many different ways to be involved. Speak to Janet Bertoli for more information. Rehearsal for the Youth Service will be Saturday, February 29th from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.



Sunday, March 22nd, is Pretzel Sunday. During the education hour at 9:30 a.m. we will enjoy hot pretzels and tell the story of the pretzel and why we eat them during Lent.

April 12th, Easter Sunday, we will once again have our Easter Breakfast for the Congregation during services that morning. Look for more Easter information in your email and in future STARS.



We have a few other events in the works. Stay tuned to your STAR and email for more information.

-Michelle Thomson, Youth Commissioner



## NAGS

The Newsletter Assembly Group meets on March 27th at 9:00 a.m. to assemble and prepare the newsletter for mailing. Come help! It's fun, and done before 10:00 a.m.



## Coffee Hour Treats

Treats make our coffee hour extra special! Please sign-up on the forms on the kiosk in the Narthex. If you have questions about what to bring you can call Lin Beck at 579-4150.

"God didn't promise days without pain, laughter without sorrow, sun without rain, but He did promise strength for the day, comfort for the tears, and light for the way."

## Missing Wheelchair

BLC has two wheelchairs to help our handicapable parishioners. We are missing one wheelchair and are looking for its whereabouts.



If you borrowed the wheelchair please return it to our ushers closet or contact the Church office. Thank you!

## Young at Heart

Young at Heart is open to all people who enjoy going out for lunch. If you are available on the third Monday of the month, join the group for some friendly fellowship. March 16th is the date, 11:45 a.m. is the time, and the International House of Pancakes near the Flamingo is the place. Join us.



## Benefit BLC with Online Shopping

Many of you are shopping for Easter gifts online. Don't forget, if you are shopping at Amazon, you can shop instead at smile.amazon.com and increase donations for Bethlehem Lutheran Church. AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support BLC every time you shop, at no cost to you. Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price (.5%). To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping.

**T**he Sanctuary will once again be brought back to life Easter morning with a display of our traditional lilies and azaleas.

If you wish to buy a plant for \$12, please make checks payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church with "flowers" on the memo line, and return with your order by Sunday, April 5th.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please choose an option below:

I prefer (enter quantity):

\_\_\_\_\_ x azalea plant      \_\_\_\_\_ x Easter lily



In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please plan to take your flowers home after Easter Services.



## BLC Monthly Book/Video/Magazine Exchange

Have you finished any adult-level book, video or magazine recently that you thought mmm, someone else might enjoy this? But who?? How to find them?? The BLC Book Exchange has the answer!

For four years now, the first Sunday of each month has found a table set up by 9:30 just outside the Narthex for you to donate any book, video or magazine you are done with, AND as importantly, for you to take away any items you see of interest. This month the exchange will take place on March 1st.

Some helpful clarifications:

- Any adult-level fiction or non-fiction item is welcomed.
- You don't need to "put in" to "take out".
- Your items are donated not loaned so they won't come back to you.
- The items you take are yours to keep.
- All items will be tagged with the date donated and the selection will be purged and donated to a non-profit thrift shop. Magazines will be recycled.
- PLEASE, no reference sets such as encyclopedias, but you can put a note on the table with contact information.
- Magazines must be within the last year.
- Remember we have a fine church library if you have a religious book (or video?) that merits being loaned and returned. Teen/children's books can be donated to our local family shelters or donation centers.



Questions? Call Rod Hannon at 707-490-6487.

# BLC High School and College Scholarships

The Education Commission administers the L.U.T.H.E.R. scholarship, a one time \$500 scholarship for high school graduating members (of at least 1 year) who will be attending a college or trade school. Due May 1, 2020.

The Education Commission administers the congregational Lutheran Education Scholarship, an ongoing \$500 scholarship for those members (of at least 1 year) attending a Lutheran College, university or seminary. Due May 1, 2020.

Eligible students will be contacted by Linda Knapp, 539-8901.

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The Endowment Committee has funds available this year for Endowment Scholarships in varying amounts for applicants who will be fulltime sophomores, juniors, or seniors at an accredited college or university for the 2020-2021 school year. Preference will be given to a student who shows financial need. The application is now available through the Church office 539-5252 or Church email [blc@sonic.net](mailto:blc@sonic.net).

All applicants should send their applications to [lak9383@hotmail.com](mailto:lak9383@hotmail.com) in PDF format.

Questions - contact Laura Knapp at 761-4160.

## Treasurer's Report

Beverly Schaap

### January 2020

	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$32,549	\$22,850	\$9,699
Expenses	\$30,438	\$30,513	-\$75
Net	\$2,111	-\$7,663	\$9,774

### YTD 2020

	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	\$32,549	\$22,850	\$9,699
Expenses	\$30,438	\$30,513	-\$75
Net	\$2,111	-\$7,663	\$9,774

Amount needed to meet the budget \$7,625 per week  
January \$8,137



## Evening Prayer

Lenten evening prayer service will start after Soup Supper Wednesdays, at 7:00 p.m.



Our evening prayer services will be a Lenten exploration entitled, "At the Name of Jesus". This 5-week series will explore Philippians 2:5-11.

## 2020 Directories

The BLC 2020 directories have been updated and are available on the table in the Narthex. If you would like a directory mailed to your home, please email the Church office.

## A word from Martin

"You have as much laughter as you do faith." -Martin Luther



## Pretzel Sunday

On March 22nd during our education hour at 9:30 a.m., we'll be burying the Alleluia banner, an ancient tradition of showing penitence during Lent. As well as eating delicious pretzels.

Come and hear the story of the pretzel and why pretzels have a spiritual Lenten significance. All are welcome to come to this BLC tradition.



The deadline for the next issue of The Bethlehem Star is March 20, 2020.

Please submit information and story ideas to the Church office or email [blc@sonic.net](mailto:blc@sonic.net).

Should you have any comments or suggestions that will help improve The Star, we will be pleased to receive them.

Should you wish to discontinue your subscription to The Star please let us know via email.